

THE TEACHING OF MUSIC IN PORTUGAL SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY TO THE BEGINNING OF THE SEVENTIES

Three years after the previous reform of the Real Conservatory of Lisbon, still happened in the nineteenth century through the Decrees of January 13th and of July 28th, 1898, the Decree of October 24th, 1901 is going to approve a new reform of this institution. At the level of the teaching of the music, this new reform has for base a study elaborated then by the headmaster of the Real Conservatory of Lisbon, Augusto Machado (1845 - †1924), which will alter the duration of some of its courses, creating the distinction between instruments of first and second category when restricting the superior degree to the piano, violin and cello courses. This way, it institutes a clear statute distinction between these three instrument courses and the remaining ones, distinction that will return again to invigorate after the reform of 1930, happened in full *military dictatorship* [1]. However, if on one side they stay the enclosed disciplines of “...*string quartet and camera music, orchestral music, chorale singing, music history and musical literature*”, as well as of “...*Italian language*”, already foreseen by the Decree of January 13th, 1898, the Decree of October 24th, 1901 will refer at once that “*the organ teacher is forced to govern an accompaniment class to the piano, consisting of the accomplishment of the figured bass, reading of orchestral scores and at first view transportation*” (Decree of 24-10-1901: art. 6th, § 3rd).

Courses/Disciplines	Speciality and Duration
Rudiments and Solfeggio	Compulsory - 2 years
Preparatory Singing Solfeggio	2 years
Singing	Individual and collective - 2 years Theatrical - 3 years
Piano	General - 5 years Superior - 3 years
Harp, Organ, Violeta, Contrabass, Trumpet, Clarion and congeners	5 years
Violin and Cello	General - 6 years Superior - 2 years
Flute, Trumpet and Reed Instruments	6 years
Trombone and congeners	4 years
Harmony	3 years
Counterpoint, Fugue and Composition	4 years

Illustration 1 - Courses and disciplines of the reform of 1901 (Decree of 24-10-1901: art. 10th).

Already in the republic [2], the Decree nr. 2710, of October 28th, 1916, will create “*in the School of Music of the Conservatory of Lisbon* [3] *an accompaniment and score reading*

course” (Decree nr. 2710: art. 1st). The article 3rd of this same decree determines that

constitutes subject teaching (...) [of this] new course the following matters:

1st year - Accomplishment to the piano of figured bass.

2nd year - Accomplishment to the piano of figured bass with successive gradations. Accompaniment especially of given songs. Adopted method - Accompaniment treatise, of E. Durand.

3rd year - Revision of the matters given the previous years, accomplishment of the classic composers' figured bass and reading of orchestral scores.

The Decree of October 24th, 1901 will still specify a complex group of priority rules on registration and frequency among the several courses/disciplines of this Conservatory, which determine that (Decree of 24-10-1901: art. 10th; § 1st to § 10th):

§ 1st The study of the music history and of the musical literature is compulsory for all the students of the superior courses of piano, violin and cello, of theatrical singing, of the classes of all the other instruments starting from the last but one year, of the harmony class, and of the counterpoint class, fugue and composition.

§ 2nd The exam of the 2nd year of the harmony course is compulsory for all the students that treats the previous paragraph.

§ 3rd The certificate of the 4th year-old frequency with the classification, at least, of sufficient and the 2nd year-old exam is compulsory for the admission in the organ class. Parallel to the 1st year of the organ course the student frequents the 5th year of the general course of piano and the 3rd of harmony, not could transit for the 2nd year without having completed the general course of piano and the one of harmony. Parallel to the last four years of the organ course it frequents the four years of the counterpoint course, fugue and composition, don't tend right to the organ course's diploma without the approval in the one of counterpoint.

§ 4th The certificate of the 4th year-old frequency with the classification, at least, of sufficient is compulsory for the admission in the harp class, being the student obliged during the course of this instrument to conclude the general course of piano.

§ 5th The certificate of frequency of the 2nd year of the general course of violin with the classification, at least, of sufficient is compulsory for the admission in the violet class. However, this certificate can be substituted by an admission exam.

§ 6th The frequency of the class of chamber music is compulsory for the students of the classes of instruments chosen by the respective teachers, in agreement with the one of this class.

§ 7th The frequency of the orchestral music class is compulsory for all the students of the classes of instruments that constitute an orchestra, since for its respective teachers and for the teacher of this class they are recognised the necessary abilities.

§ 8th The class of chorale singing is compulsory for the students that have ended the 2nd year of rudiments and be reputed capable for this frequency.

§ 9th The frequency of the course of dramatic art is compulsory for the students of the class of theatrical

singing.

§ 10th For the frequency of the class of individual and collective singing, can be released all the qualifications to the candidates that reveal very exceptional abilities, and that they submit to a special exam before a jury named by the headmaster of the Conservatory, and presided by the headmaster of the musical section. Approved that are, they cannot make the 2nd year-old exam of individual and collective singing without the presentation of the 2nd year-old exam certificate, and if during the 1st year-old frequency those disciplines they don't obtain the classification, at least, of sufficient, they can only continue that frequency after they have presented all the demanded qualifications.

In the sequence of the coming, among us, of the *mutual teaching*, based on the English *self-tuition* and exposed anonymously, in November of 1815, in the *Portuguese Investigator in England* and, in 1818, by Cândido Xavier in the second volume of the *Annals of the Sciences* (Carvalho, 1996: 525-32), the article 27th of the Decree of October 24th, 1901, will determine that “*for the musical teaching classes that are excessive in the students' frequency, it can have monitors, that, under the respective teachers' examination, will be provisory entrusted of teaching, without right to any expiration*”. For the positions of monitors “*...will only be chosen the advanced students of the distinct disciplines and that more has distinguished in its studies*” (Decree of 24-10-1901: art. 27th, § 1st). In the sense of avoiding refuses of the students that are requested to exercise these functions, it is still determined that “*the student that refuse to the monitor service will be scratched out of the Conservatory*” (Decree of 24-10-1901: art. 27th, § 3rd).

After the implantation of the republic, happened on October 5th, 1910, it is “*...created for the Porto's City Hall, in session of January 1st, 1917, with applause and unanimous approval of the whole senate*” (Torres, 1933: 5), a new Conservatory of Music, being this the second to appear among us as a result of the state initiative. However, from its foundation its statutes will be regulated by the regime of studies in vigour for the Conservatory of Lisbon, going the approved legislation [4] to limit to apply to the Porto's Conservatory of Music the regimes of studies to the date foreseen for the Conservatory of Lisbon.

It is only through the Decree nr. 5546, of May 9th, 1919, and of the Decree nr. 6129, of September 25th, 1919, that a new reform of the ministered musical teaching will be approved in the Conservatory of Lisbon, which it will be applied to the Porto's Conservatory of Music by force of the Decree nr. 16677, on April 1st, 1929. On the other hand, having been consummated, in 1911, the separation of the theatre's school from the music's school [5], the article 1st of the Decree nr. 5546 will determine that the Conservatory of Lisbon starts to

denominate National Conservatory of Music.

The reform of 1919 will be the most complex and innovator reform that this teaching institution ever went through. This reform fits inside of the great republican ideals emerged with the revolution of October 5th, 1910. The reform of 1919 of the National Conservatory of Music had as its main mentors the pianist José Viana da Mota (1868 - †1948) and the composer and musicologist Luís de Freitas Branco (1890 - †1955). In May 16th, 1919 the Instruction's Minister, Leonardo José Coimbra, appoint Viana da Mota as headmaster of this Conservatory, position that he will maintain, later as headmaster of the National Conservatory's musical section, to its retirement happened in 1938. Freitas Branco will occupy the sub director position.

The preamble of the Decree nr. 5546 will establish the bases for this new reform, beginning by telling us *“the reality of the actions, more than the weight of the arguments, is that will show the advantages of the present reform of the Conservatory of Lisbon”*. It continues, saying that (Decree nr. 5546: preamble)

its teaching processes were antiquated. Its organisation was defective. Its professorship not well paid.

Still there was followed, as musical initiation, the teaching of the prayed solfeggio. Neglecting to the students what the notes possess of more fundamental representative - the sound - began the teaching of the music. To this initial defect they called, with having worsened intensity, other many and multiple incongruities.

Was not an exclusive course of composition, was not an instrumentation chair, nor a class of orchestra regency. Not were taught to the students' notions of acoustics, or the generic beginnings of the musical aesthetics, nor none preliminary of the other musical sciences. Not were provided them Portuguese, history or geography's learning and remaining general culture that should walk linked to the teaching of the specialities. In the classes where the individual teaching should prevail (piano, violin, cello, etc.), the pedagogic principle of the students' limitation was of such stretched elasticity that these received, as a lot, a lesson of ten to twelve minutes a month. The own students, appointed as monitors, taught with official sanction the school companions, catching them execution defects and other mistakes [6], natural in who still learns.

To everything this and too much more it tried to obviate the present decree.

The innovations introduced by this reform in the teaching ministered in the National Conservatory of Music are multiple and too extensive for being here analysed. In any way, we can refer as some of its intents: to divide all the instruments and composition courses in three different degrees, i.e. elementary, complemental and superior; increasing the duration of the vocal music and piano courses; creating the virtuosity degree in piano, violin and cello; the

determination that “*in the classes whose base must be the individual teaching is limited for eight students in each group*” (Decree nr. 5546: preamble) [7]; and the creation of an important source of revenues for subsidies to the needed students through the increase of school fees now carried out, what will allow to the “*...Conservatory (...) [to be living] of its own resources*” (Decree nr. 5546: preamble).

Courses/Disciplines	Speciality and Duration
Solfeggio	Common preparatory teaching - 2 years
Singing, Harp, Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon and Trumpet	Elementary - 2 years Complemental - 2 years Superior - 2 years
Piano	Elementary - 3 years Complemental - 3 years Superior - 3 years Virtuosity - 1 year
Organ	Elementary - 2 years Complemental - 3 years Superior - 2 years
Violin and Cello	Elementary - 3 years Complemental - 3 years Superior - 2 years Virtuosity - 1 year
Violeta and Contrabass	Elementary - 2 years Complemental - 2 years Superior - 1 year
Piccolo, English Horn, Bass Clarinet, Saxophone, Contrabassoon, Sax Horn and Tuba	Elementary - 2 years Complemental - 1 year Superior - 1 year
Trumpet and French Horn	Elementary - 2 years Complemental - 2 years Superior - 1 year
Composition	Elementary (Harmony) - 3 years Complemental (Counterpoint, canon and fugue) - 2 years Superior (Composition) - 3 years
Instrumentation and Score Reading	2 years
Regency of Orchestra	2 years
Portuguese	3 years
French	2 years
Italian	3 years
History and Geography	2 years
Musical Sciences	Elementary notions of acoustics - 1 year Music history - 2 years Musical aesthetics - 2 years

Illustration 2 - Courses and disciplines of the reform of 1919 (Decree nr. 5546: art. 5th).

Continuing the tradition already begun with the Decree of October 24th, 1901, the article

6th of the Decree nr. 5546 determine a large group of norms about the precedence and admission to the different courses. It states “*for the admission to the 1st year [of Solfeggio] it is necessary the presentation of the primary’s instruction exam certificate*” (Decree nr. 5546: art. 6.th). On the other hand, “*the 2nd year-old frequency [of Solfeggio] can be cumulative with the one of the 1st year of any course, with the exception of the composition one*” (Decree nr. 5546: art. 6th).

After the military blow of May 28th, 1926, still during the period of the *military dictatorship* that preceded the *new state*, the National Conservatory of Music will be again the reform’s target of its statutes. This new reform has been preceded by the reintegration of the teaching of the music and of the theatre in a same institution. In this sense, the Decree nr. 18461, of June 14th, 1930, determine that “*the National Conservatory of Music and the National Conservatory of Theatre [8] start to constitute only one school institution, the National Conservatory, under the administration of an inspector*” (Decree nr. 18461: art. 1st). This same decree states that “*the headmaster of the National Conservatory of Theatre will assume the functions of inspector of the Conservatory immediately*” (Decree nr. 18461: art. 2nd) and “*the headmaster of the musical section will be the present headmaster of the National Conservatory of Music [José Viana of Mota], to which all the privileges are maintained, including the residence in the building*” (Decree nr. 18461: art. 3rd, § 1st).

For a better understanding of the true reasons behind this reform, it becomes necessary to refer that, soon after the military blow of May 28th, 1926, were instituted a series of modifications at all levels of the Portuguese educational system, which sought among other things, in a declared way, the combat to the communism and the installation of a regime of fascist nature to the likeness than it came to happen in Italy with Mussolini, in Germany with Hitler, and in Spain with Franco. Salazar affirmed for several times that “*we would not understand - we could not consent - that the Portuguese school was neutral (...) [for that] we want (...) the family and the school to print in the souls in formation (...) those high and noble feelings that distinguish our civilisation and [the] deep love to its Homeland*” (Carvalho, 1996: 724).

It is also significant, of the mentality of this time, the statements uttered by Virgínia de Castro e Almeida's writer, in the newspaper *O Século*, concerning about the seventy five percents of illiterates then existent in Portugal: “*the prettiest, stronger and healthier part of the Portuguese soul resides in those [same] seventy five percent of illiterates*” (Carvalho, 1996: 726). Given this whole political and social context, we are of the opinion that the true reasons behind the reform of 1930 of the National Conservatory of Music were never of

economical or financial order. This in spite of the preamble of the Decree nr. 18881, of September 25th, 1930, which intend to do us to believe the other way around, saying that these were the reasons that determine the substantial reduction operated at the level of the objectives and contents of the musical formation taught in the National Conservatory of Music. We are of the opinion that the real reasons that took to this reform are merely of political nature, being these the reflex of a mentality whose perspective of an compulsory school resided in a mere one to know to read, to write and to count.

Courses/Disciplines	Speciality and Duration
Solfeggio	Common preparatory teaching - 2 years [9]
Singing	General - 3 years
Theatrical singing	Superior - 2 years
Concert singing	Superior - 3 years
Piano, Violin and Cello	General - 6 years
	Superior - 3 years
Contrabass, Organ, French Horn, Clarion of pistons, Trombone and Tuba	4 years
Harp, Violeta and Piccolo, Oboe, English Horn, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Saxophone, Bassoon and Contrabassoon, Trumpet and Sax Horn	5 years
Composition	General - 3 years
Composition Counterpoint, Canon, Fugue and Musical Aesthetics	Superior - 2 years
Composition and Instrumentation	2 years
Acoustics and Music History	2 years
Portuguese	2 years
Italian	2 years

Illustration 3 - Courses and disciplines of the reform of 1930 (Decree nr. 18881: art. 10th).

The article 11th of the Decree nr. 18881 extinguishes “*the virtuosity degree of the disciplines of piano, violin and cello*” as well as the disciplines of “*instrumentation and score reading, orchestra regency, french, history and geography, and musical sciences*”. The article 12th of this same decree determines that “*for the register in the 1st year of solfeggio it is indispensable the presentation of the certificate of the exam of primary instruction*”, and (Decree nr. 18881: art. 12th, § 1st to § 3rd)

§ 1st No student can enrol in the 1st year of the singing courses or of any instrument without presenting the certificate of the 2nd year-old solfeggio exam.

§ 2nd Portuguese's teaching will be done during the two years of the solfeggio teaching.

§ 3rd The frequency of the 19th discipline [Portuguese] is released to the students that possess frequency or exam certificate of the Portuguese 2nd year, gone by any official establishment.

To the likeness of what already happened with the Decree of October 24th, 1901 and with the Decree nr. 5546, the article 13th of the Decree nr. 18881 will also establish precedence rules saying that “*are necessary the following qualification for the admission to the different courses and exams*” (Decree nr. 18881: art. 13th):

- 1st The exam certificate of acoustics and music history for admission to the registration in the 3rd year of the general course of composition;
- 2nd The certificate of exam of the general course of composition for admission to the registration in the superior courses of singing, piano, violin and cello, and in the last year of the courses of the remaining instruments;
- 3rd The certificate of the Italian exam for admission to the superior courses of composition and of singing;
- 4th The certificate of frequency of the disciplines of the theatre course for admission to the final exam of theatrical singing;
- 5th The certificate of exam of the general course of piano for admission to the final exam of the superior course of composition;
- 6th The certificate of the exam of the 3rd year of the general course of piano for admission to the registration in the 1st year of organ;
- 7th The certificate of frequency of the 2nd year of the general course of violin for admission to the registration in the 1st year of viola;
- 8th The certificate of exam of the 3rd year of the general course of cello for admission to the registration in the last year of contrabass.

However, comparatively to the Decree nr. 5546 that instituted the reform of 1919 of the National Conservatory of Music, these determinations corresponds to an enormous simplification of the procedures foreseen and it constitutes a wide setback relatively to the previous reform of this institution.

For besides the disciplines referred in its article 10th, the Decree nr. 18881 still determines, and to the likeness of what already happened in previous decrees, that “*will be three group classes: a) Class of chorale singing; b) Class of chamber music; [and] c) Orchestra class*” (Decree nr. 18881: art. 15th). Although, it refers that “*the chorale singing is compulsory for all the students, except [for] those whose lack of physical conditions be verified by the school doctor*” (Decree nr. 18881: art. 15th, § 1st). This last normative disposition “*...had serious consequences (...) [at the level of the] vocational musical teaching [10], where the importance of the group music has frequently been underestimated*” (Palheiros, 1993: 27).

Relatively to the reform ordered by the Decree nr. 18881 it will appear, at once, a plenty active resistance inside the National Conservatory. The knowledge of all this resistance

process is of primordial importance for the understanding of the directions that took to the plenty negative reaction manifested by the National Conservatory, in a statement elaborated in March 1971, to the proposal of the school system's reform presented in January of that same year by the Minister of the National Education, José Veiga Simão. This because, in this proposal of global reform of the school system, it was shimmered the intention of integrating the whole artistic teaching (music, theatre and dance) in the general outlines of schooling (MEN, 1971). However, derived to the political atmosphere lived in the country, namely soon after the April 25th, 1974, this intention comes only to reality in the beginning of the eighties with the Law by Decree nr. 310/83, of June 1st, 1983.

The reasons that will have taken to this paradigm's change at the level of the conception of the artistic educational system (music, theatre and dance), opting for its insertion in the general outlines of schooling, are not entirely clear, constituting an options mixture of political nature and of influences suffered through our participation in international organisms like OECD. However, we think not to be totally strange to this option the resistance of the National Conservatory to the reform of its statutes operated by the Decree nr. 18881, as well as to the Minister of the National Education's reference, Francisco Leite Pinto, in 1959, that the "...*extension of the compulsory school system*", inserted in a global reform of the Portuguese schools, "...*should be accomplished through (...) [a] cycle common to all secondary studies*" (Martins *et al.*, 1963). This option, for an only road in the secondary education, also goes to the encounter of the recommendations emanated by OECD (OECD, 1966: 93-4) about the reforms that should be undertaken in our educational system up to 1975.

A detailed discussion of all this problematic will be retaken in the next number, where we will still approach the evolution of the specialised teaching of music, from the antecedents of the pedagogic experience's regime of 1971, up to the present time.

NOTES

- [1] The *military dictatorship* is implanted with the blow of the May 28th, 1926. The emergent political regime, of repressive and dictatorial nature, will last until the revolution happened on April 25th, 1974. In fact, with the approval of the Constitution of 1933, the *military dictatorship* had become the *new state*. However, between 1928 and 1968, the political regime then effective in Portugal will be dominated by a teacher of the Coimbra's University, named António de Oliveira Salazar (1889 - †1970), first as the Finances' Minister and later on, starting from 1932, as the First Minister. Be noticed that in spite of the *President of the Council*, name by which Oliveira Salazar went known after its ascension to the First Minister's position, to

be, from the approval of the Constitution of 1933, the second figure of the constitutional regime by that time effective, below the Republic's President, he was who in fact had all the effective political power. This was been largely to owe to the fact that Oliveira Salazar accumulated the First Minister's position with the one of the presidency of the National Union, existent only party and which dominated all the aspects of the national political life.

- [2] In Portugal the republic is implanted by the revolution of October 5th, 1910.
- [3] Soon after the implantation of the Republic the Real Conservatory of Lisbon becomes designated only as Conservatory of Lisbon, which was to the date constituted by a school of music and a school of theatre.
- [4] Decree nr. 16677, of April 1st, 1929 and Decree nr. 18995, of November 1st, 1930.
- [5] The Decree of May 22nd, 1911 will remove the theatre teaching from the Conservatory of Lisbon, creating the School of the Representing Art. The teaching of the theatre and the music are incorporate again in the same teaching institution through the Decree nr. 18461, of June 14th, 1930.
- [6] In this passage, Viana of Mota criticises the effects that he considers disastrous of the classes being taught by the monitors, something that, having among us a reference tradition and experimentation of almost one century, had been applied to the Real Conservatory of Lisbon by force of the determination stated in article 27th of the Decree of October 24th, 1901.
- [7] It is very interesting to verify that, unlike the present reality lived in Portugal at the level of the specialised teaching of music, the instruments were taught in classes, being these ministered in eight students' groups. These groups had a weekly schedule of four hours to what corresponded “...*the directed received lesson time (...) of half hour a week*” (Decree nr. 5546: preamble) per each student.
- [8] By a reform still happened during the first republic, to the School of the Representing Art succeeded the National Conservatory of Theatre.
- [9] The Decree nr. 23577, of February 19th, 1934, will determine that the “...*solfeggio teaching (...) becomes ministered in three years, becoming trained in the two first the intoned solfeggio and being especially the third year consecrated to the rhythmic reading and the musical dictation*” (Decree nr. 23577: art. 1st). Until the publication of the Law by Decree nr. 310/83, of July 1st, 1983, this is the last legal alteration of the statutes of the National Conservatory after the publication of the Decree nr. 18881, of September 25th, 1930.
- [10] Vocational teaching of music or specialised teaching of music. Both expressions refer to the musical teaching, of the non-superior level, nowadays taught in Portugal by the several Conservatories, Academies and Schools of Music.

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